[](http://www.biographyonline.net/artists/michelangelo.html) [Michelangelo](http://www.biographyonline.net/artists/michelangelo.html) (1475 – 1564)

Michelangelo Buonarroti was born on 6 March 1475, in a Florentine village called Caprese. His father was a magistrate of the Florentine Republic and came from an important family.

However, Michelangelo was attracted by the artistic world. At the time, this was considered an inferior occupation for a family of his standing. But, aged 13, Michelangelo was apprenticed to Domenico Ghirlandaio, the leading fresco wall painter in Florence. Here Michelangelo learned some of the basic painting techniques, and also taught himself new skills such as sculpting.

His talents were soon noticed by one of the most powerful families in Florence – Lorenzo de’ Medici. Here, at de Medici’s court, Michelangelo was able to learn from the classic Masters and he became determined to improve upon the great classics of Greek and Latin art.

In 1496, Michelangelo travelled to Rome where he began doing commissions for the Popes who were making St Peter’s Basilica a pinnacle of Western art.

His most famous sculpture was his huge undertaking of a life size David. This was hewn from a huge block of marble dragged down from a nearby Florentine mine. Michelangelo created a masterpiece – a perfection of the human form – and most agreed, Michelangelo had surpassed the classic predecessors. David was put pride of place in front of the seat of Florentine government.

Michelangelo was a contemporary of the other sublime artist of his generation – the genius of Leonardo da Vinci. However, with Michelangelo’s short temper and pride, the two had a difficult relationship. At one time, the Florentine government wanted the two geniuses to work side by side – each painting a side of a council chamber. But, it was not a success and neither finished.

In 1505, Pope Julius II offered Michelangelo a new commission to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The project took four years to complete and involved Michelangelo working in awkward positions painting through great neck pain.

Michelangelo gained the reputation of the ‘divine Michelangelo’ – A reputation he was only too quick to encourage. Michelangelo suffered from no false modesty and always felt himself to be God’s Artist.

In his final years, he became increasingly religious. His depth of religious feeling can be seen through his poetry and direction of his art.

*The true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection.*

Michelangelo

Michelangelo was a unique artist who created works of such sublime beauty his reputation will always be treasured.

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